

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6971

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 11985

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, FT, SO, ET

SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR ON PMAC DEL VISIT TO USSR

REF: (A) MOSCOW 11682, (B) ADDIS ABABA 8279

1. SUMMARY. ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR'S DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF PMAC VISIT TO MOSCOW REINFORCES PREVIOUS INDICATIONS THAT ETHIOPIANS PLAYED HEAVILY ON THEIR COMMITMENT TO SOCIALISM TO WHEEDLE SOVIET "IMPARTIALITY" ON FTAI, THAT THEY WANT TO BELIEVE THEY ACHIEVED THIS AIM, AND THAT CONCRETE ECONOMIC AND OTHER TYPES OF COOPERATION ARE JUST ENTERING THE PLANNING STAGE AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. ITALIAN POLITICAL COUNSELOR MIGLIORNINA HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR BELATCHEW ASRAT'S DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF PMAC DELEGATION'S VISIT TO MOSCOW, DURING JULY 21 CALL BY ITALIAN DCM CASTALDO.
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3. FACT THAT MOGES WAS MERELY CHAIRMAN OF PMAC ECONOMIC COMMITTEE WAS NOT SPELLED OUT IN COMMUNIQUE IN ORDER TO UNDERLINE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF VISIT. WHOSE FIRST AIM HAD BEEN TO ESTABLISH HIGH-LEVEL CONTACT WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE REVOLUTION AND TO PREPARE THE GROUND FOR COOPERATION IN OTHER FIELDS.

4. THE VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT HAD INDEED LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR FURTHER COOPERATION. THE PREVIOUS ETHIOPIAN VISIT TO PEKING HAD TAKEN PLACE ON A PURELY FORMAL PLANE: THE VISIT TO THE USSR WAS OF MUCH GREATER IMPORTANCE.

5. THE EXCHANGES ON MOST MULTILATERAL ISSUES--DIS-ARMAMENT, THE MIDDLE EAST, THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT--HAD BEEN "NOT ONLY ON THE SURFACE." ON THE INDIAN OCEAN AND POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ZONE OF PEACE THERE, HOWEVER, THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCUSSION IN DEPTH, ALTHOUGH THE ETHIOPIANS HAD RECONFIRMED THEIR POSITION IN FAVOR OF DISMANTLING ALL MILITARY BASES IN THE AREA.

6. CONVERSATION HAD FOCUSED ON THREE POINTS: THE PROGRAM OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, ERITREA AND DJIBOUTI. ON THE LAST TWO, THE ETHIOPIANS HAD APPEALED TO THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY THE SOVIET UNION SHOULD FEEL AS A GREAT POWER IN THE REGION AND TO ITS INTEREST THAT STABILITY BE MAINTAINED. ON DJIBOUTI, THEY HAD FOUND THE SOVIETS IN FAVOR OF INDEPENDENCE AND HAD STRESSED THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR INDEPENDENCE TO BE FORMALLY IMPLEMENTED. IT IS ALSO NECESSARY, ETHIOPIANS MAINTAINED, THAT EQUILIBRIUM IN THE AREA NOT BE ALTERED BY INFILTRATION OF SOME ETHNIC GROUPS INSTEAD OF OTHERS. THE ETHIOPIANS THOUGHT THE SOVIETS SHOWED "A SINCERE PREOCCUPATION" AND THE INTENTION TO PLAY AN IMPARTIAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING SUCH AN EQUILIBRIUM.

7. NOW THAT ETHIOPIA IS ON ITS WAY TO SOCIALISM, THE
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AMBASSADOR SAID, THE SOVIET UNION AS AN IMPORTANT POWER IN THE REGION SHOULD GIVE GREATER WEIGHT TO ADDIS ABABA'S POSITION. HE CONSIDERED THAT THE VISIT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THE SOCIALIST INCLINATION OF ETHIOPIAN POLICY, WHOSE FOREIGN POLICY ASPECTS SHOULD NOW BE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO THE USSR AND THE OTHER "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES. RELATIONS WITH "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES WILL BE PARTICULARLY DEEPENED. HOWEVER, THE

AMBASSADOR CAUTIONED, STATEMENTS AGAINST IMPERIALISM DO NOT IMPLY THAT ETHIOPIA INTENDS TO DECREASE THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE WEST, WHICH WILL BE INSPIRED "BY REGOROUS INTERPRETATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL ADVANTAGE."

8. COMMENT. THIS EXPLANATION, WHICH WE REPORT AS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST AND WHICH READS LIKE A COMMUNIQUE ITSELF, TENDS TO CONFIRM OUR SUSPICIONS THAT:

-- ETHIOPIANS PLAYED THE "SOCIALIST CARD" (PER REF B) TO ENCOURAGE SOVIETS TO PLAY THE "ETHIOPIAN CARD" IN THE HORN;

-- THEY ARE MILKING EVERY SIGN THAT SOVIETS FAVOR STABILITY AS AN EARNEST OF SOVIET IMPARTIALITY ON DJIBOUTI DISPUTE;

-- VISIT RESULTED IN AGREEMENT TO GO TO THE DRAWING BOARD ON ECONOMIC AND OTHER KINDS OF COOPERATION; AND

-- IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT SOVIETS SHARE THE OPTIMISM OR THE VIEWS BEING EXPRESSED HERE BY OUR ETHIOPIAN COLLEAGUES.

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